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Listing of the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of transporting packets from a first voice switch coupled to a communication network, comprising:
 - receiving, at the first voice switch, information bearing packets from at least one of a plurality of transport mediums of a first subscriber intended for routing to a second subscriber;
 - determining if a transport stream exists between the first voice switch and a second voice switch serving said second subscriber;
 - determining if the first voice switch and the second voice switch are compatible responsive to a determination that the transport stream between the first voice switch and the second voice switch does not exist;
 - establishing the transport stream responsive to a determination that the first switch and the second switch are compatible, wherein said establishing comprises:
 - establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode physical layer;
 - establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode logical layer over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode physical layer; and
 - establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode Adaptation Layer 2 (AAL2) layer over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode logical layer; and
 - multiplexing said packets onto [[a]] the transport stream as AAL2 packets adapted for transmission over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode Adaptation Layer 2 (AAL2) layer, said AAL2 packets intended for [[a]] the second voice switch serving said the second subscriber, responsive to a determination that said first switch and said second switch are compatible; and
 - ~~enabling the communication of said transport stream to said communication network.~~
2. (Cancelled)

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3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein each of said AAL2 ~~packet~~ packets comprises:
a caller identifier field for identifying a caller.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein each of said AAL2 ~~packet~~ packets comprises:
a length indicator field for identifying the size of a payload.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein each of said AAL2 ~~packet~~ packets comprises:
a header error check field for identifying errors in the call identifier field.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein each of said AAL2 ~~packet~~ packets comprises:
a payload field for transporting said packets.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein each of said AAL2 ~~packet~~ packets comprises:
a User-to-User Indicator field for providing a link between a CPS sub-layer and a Service Specific Convergence sub-layer (SSCS) of the each AAL2 packet.

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12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said packets are compressed voice packets.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of said voice switches is a private branch exchange (PBX).

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of said first and second switches is a local exchange.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of transporting voice traffic between a first voice switch, over a Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), to a second voice switch, comprises:

receiving, at the first voice switch servicing a first subscriber, an analog voice call from the first subscriber for routing to a second subscriber;

digitizing said voice traffic;

packetizing said digitized traffic;

compressing said packetized traffic;

multiplexing said packets onto a transport stream containing packets from at least one of a plurality of non-analog based voice calls intended for a second voice switch serving said second subscriber, responsive to a determination that said first switch and said second switch are compatible; and

enabling the communication of said transport stream packets to said PSTN by establishing a packet transport medium, wherein said establishing said packet transport medium comprises:

establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode physical layer;

establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode logical layer over the

Asynchronous Transfer Mode physical layer;

establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode Adaptation Layer 2 (AAL2) layer over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode logical layer; and

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mapping the transport stream packets into AAL2 packets adapted for transmission over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode Adaptation Layer 2 (AAL2) layer.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[20]]~~ 15, wherein each of said AAL2 packets comprises at least one of:

a call identifier field for identifying a caller;

a length indicator field for identifying the size of a payload;

a header error check field for identifying errors in the call identifier field; and

a payload field for transporting said packets.

a User-to-User Indicator field for providing a link between a CPS sub-layer and a Service Specific Convergence sub-layer (SSCS) of the AAL2 packet packets.

22. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein at least one of said voice switches is a private branch exchange (PBX).

23. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein at least one of said first and second switches is a local exchange.

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24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a first voice switch for receiving information bearing packets from at least one of a plurality of transport mediums of a first subscriber intended for routing to a second subscriber over a network;

~~said first switch, in response to a determination that said first switch and a respective second voice switch are compatible, multiplexing said packets onto a transport stream intended for said second voice switch; and enabling the communication of said transport stream to said communication network adapted for:~~

determining if a transport stream exists between the first voice switch and a second voice switch serving said second subscriber;

determining if the first voice switch and the second voice switch are compatible responsive to a determination that the transport stream between the first voice switch and the second voice switch does not exist;

establishing the transport stream responsive to a determination that the first switch and the second switch are compatible, wherein said establishing comprises:

establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode physical layer;

establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode logical layer

over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode physical layer; and

establishing an Asynchronous Transfer Mode Adaptation Layer 2 (AAL2) layer over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode logical layer; and

multiplexing said packets onto the transport stream as AAL2 packets adapted for transmission over the Asynchronous Transfer Mode Adaptation Layer 2 (AAL2) layer, said AAL2 packets intended for the second voice switch serving the second subscriber.

25. (Cancelled)

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26. (Cancelled)

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[28]]~~ 24, wherein each of said AAL2 packet ~~packets~~ comprises at least one of:

a call identifier field for identifying a caller;

a length indicator field for identifying the size of a payload;

a header error check field for identifying errors in the call identifier field;

a payload field for transporting said packets; and

a User-to-User Indicator field for providing a link between a CPS sub-layer and a Service Specific Convergence sub-layer (SSCS) of the AAL2 packet packets.

30. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein said packets are compressed voice packets.

31. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein at least one of said voice switches is a private branch exchange (PBX).

32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein at least one of said voice switches is a local exchange switch.